

Central Intelligence Agency



Washington, D.C. 20505

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25 March 1996

Lieutenant General Kenneth Minihan, USAF  
 Director  
 National Security Agency  
 Fort George G. Meade, Maryland 20755

Dear General Minihan:

I am delighted by the progress that NSA has made in declassifying the "Venona" translations of Soviet intelligence cables from the 1940s. As I stated when we declassified this program in July 1995, the Intelligence Community does not "own" national security secrets, but rather holds them in trust for the American people. Your latest release of Venona cables is the most exciting yet, and should help dispel misunderstandings about a controversial era of American history.

I would also like to express my satisfaction over NSA's cooperation with CIA's Center for the Study of Intelligence (CSI) in organizing the upcoming scholarly conference on Venona. The Center has worked with several NSA components on the conference itself and on a volume of declassified Venona documents to be released at that event. The Director of CSI, Brian Latell, tells me that relations between the experts involved have been most cordial and productive.

Keep up the good work!

Sincerely,

John Deutch  
 Director of Central Intelligence

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